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## CURRICULUM CHANGES IN THE PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

**Introduction** The continuing study and development of the curriculum in schools of social work is one of the most important functions of the Council on Social Work Education. Since the Hollis-Taylor report and the adoption by the graduate schools in 1952 of a new Curriculum Policy Statement, 1/ all of the schools have been engaged in reexamination of their educational goals and many of the schools have revised their educational programs.

At a meeting of the Division of Graduate Schools in Washington in January, 1954, the Executive Committee of the Division was asked by the schools to establish a project which would result in the pooling and sharing of information on recent curriculum developments. For this purpose, in May 1954, a Curriculum Study Committee was organized. It included: Miss Eleanor Cranefield, Miss Mary Hester, Miss Rachel Marks, Mr. Paul Simon, Miss Esther Test, Mr. Wayne Vasey and the Rev. Felix Biestek, chairman. A questionnaire, designed to elicit information on curriculum changes, was distributed to all accredited schools in February, 1955. The schools were asked to classify program changes under the three areas of knowledge described in the Curriculum Policy Statement, as follows:

**THE SOCIAL SERVICES:** "Knowledge and understanding of... current social welfare programs under public and private auspices..."

**HUMAN GROWTH AND BEHAVIOR:** "Normal physical, mental and emotional growth... [and] ...deviations from the normal as manifested in social and emotional difficulties, and in physical, emotional or mental disability or disease."

**SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE:** "...common objectives, principles, and methods, as well as the unique elements of social casework, social group work, community organization in social work, administration in social work, and research in social work."

Of the 58 graduate schools of social work in the United States and Canada, then accredited by the Council, 50 reported.

The report is in the nature of a preliminary survey of curriculum changes. It will now be possible through the comprehensive curriculum study project which has just been initiated by the Council to make detailed analysis of the information submitted by the schools. While the report was designed in the first instance for the use of the graduate schools, the committee agreed that, because of the interest of all Council members in current curriculum development, it should be shared with the total constituency. The Rev. Felix Biestek, chairman, Miss Rachel Marks and Mr. Paul Simon carried major responsibility for the analysis of the findings, which are presented below in three parts: A. THE CLASSROOM COURSES; B. THE WRITTEN RESEARCH REQUIREMENT; and C. FIELD WORK.

### A. THE CLASSROOM COURSES

The principal trend in the classroom courses is toward integration. From the frequency with which the schools report efforts at "integration" and experiments in combining courses, it seems apparent that there has been movement away from the offering of discrete courses, with wide choice left to the students, toward a sequential plan, with only limited choice for students. Although it does not fit all the schools, the following description offered by one school is perhaps fairly typical of what is going on in a number 1/ Curriculum Policy Statement. (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1952, mimeo, 10t).

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of places:

The change here is not from one course to another, but a fundamental change in approach from a series of discrete courses to an area construct within which particular courses... are offered as a means to the end of providing a sequence... The essential construct is to provide a basic course, common to all students, in the first year, followed by a sequence in the second year through which the student attempts to explore a smaller part of the total field in greater depth, and to bring to bear the complexities of the relevant disciplines. There is no segregation insofar as the courses in the social services and human growth and behavior areas are concerned.

The trend toward integration is by no means universal, however. One dean reports that his faculty, "after spending a great deal of time considering the so-called trend toward integration of courses in three areas, has deliberately taken the position of preferring to go slow on this because it does feel that there may be a great deal of fad and fashion in this trend which represents no genuine progress in curriculum organization."

Despite the movement toward integration, there is still great variety in the offerings of the schools and in the content considered essential for all students. Some schools require all students to take substantially the same classroom hours, while others permit wide choice in courses within the three areas.

This report on the classroom courses is limited to:

1. casework students only.
2. the classroom time of courses required of these students; an analysis of the content of required courses will have to await a more comprehensive curriculum study.
3. the number of hours in specified courses required of all casework students. This number will ordinarily be lower than the total number of hours required. For example, two schools may require the total number of 650 hours; School A requires 500 hours in specified courses, allowing a choice of courses for 150 hours; while School B requires 400 hours in specified courses, allowing a choice of 250 course hours. In the area of social services, to continue the illustration, both schools may require 120 hours; but School A is explicit that all the hours be taken in the courses entitled, "Public Welfare", "Child Welfare", and "History of Social Work"; while School B specifies only the course in "Public Welfare" and permits the student to choose any other two of the five available social service courses.

Since this study was interested in the core of the curriculum of each school, data were obtained about the hours only of the specified required courses. The total number of classroom hours required of each student was not obtained.

Table 1 shows the total number of classroom hours in specified courses required of all casework students during the two years of study. In a few schools students have less than 400 hours in specified courses (an average of less than six classroom hours a week for 70-72 weeks); at the other end of the scale there are two schools in which students have more than 700 hours in specified courses, with a maximum of 864 in one school. (From the table, it is apparent that schools with less than

seventy-five students have, on the whole, more hours required for all casework students than do the larger schools. This may, of course, be related more to availability of teaching staff and to size of classes than to a different conception of what is desirable).

Table 1

Classroom Hours in Specified Courses Required of All Casework Students  
in Fifty Schools of Social Work, 1954-55, by Number of  
Students Enrolled on November 1, 1954

Classroom Hours in Specified Courses Required of All Caseworkers	Schools		
	Total	Enrollment Less than 75	Enrollment 75 or over
Less than 400 . . . . .	5	3	2
400 - 449 . . . . .	10	4	6
450 - 499 . . . . .	10	6	4
500 - 549 . . . . .	9	6	3
550 - 599 . . . . .	7	6	1
600 - 649 . . . . .	4	4	-
650 - 699 . . . . .	3	3	-
700 - more. . . . .	2	2	-
Total. . . . .	50	34	16

How is the time in required courses distributed among the three areas?

Table 2 shows the total number of classroom hours in specified courses in the major curriculum areas required of all casework students. The wide range in each area is of interest. It seems apparent that the "basic minimum" of required work varies widely from school to school. These figures take on more meaning as the areas are examined separately.

Table 2

Classroom Hours in Specified Courses Required of All Casework Students  
in Fifty Schools of Social Work, 1954-55, by Curriculum Areas

Classroom Hours in Specified Courses Required of All Casework Students	Area			
	Social Services	Human Growth & Behavior	Social Work Practice	Other*
Less than 50. . . . .	4	-	-	9
50 - 99 . . . . .	22	7	-	5
100- 149. . . . .	21	23	2	-
150- 199. . . . .	3	18	5	-
200- 249. . . . .	-	1	16	-
250- 299. . . . .	-	-	13	-
300- or more. . . . .	-	1	14	-
None . . . . .	-	-	-	36

\*Primarily courses in "Ethics" and "Philosophy of Social Work".

The Social Services There is great variety in the patterns to be found in this area in the various schools. A few schools have general courses with such titles as "The Social Services", "Social Welfare Organization", etc. These courses include all the content offered in this area. They must be taken in a specified order during one or both years of the two-year program. Other schools have separate courses with different titles, such as "Public Assistance", "Public Welfare", "Public Health and Medical Care", etc., but require that the courses be taken in a specified order. Yet others have a variety of courses, with perhaps one or more required and others from which one or more alternatives must be chosen. For example, one school requires that students take a basic course plus either "History of Social Welfare" or "Seminar in Social Welfare Policies".

As indicated in Tables 1 and 2, there is also great variation in the number of hours in specified courses required of all casework students. Requirements range from 30 hours in one school to 190 in another. The median is 96 hours. Required courses are concentrated in the first year, with all schools having at least one required course. Twenty-two schools have no required course in the second year. The figures may be summarized as follows:

Table 3

Classroom Hours in Social Services Courses Required  
of All Casework Students by First and Second Year

Number of Hours	Schools Requiring in	
	First Year	Second Year
Less than 50 hours....	8	21
50 - 99 hours.....	36	6
100 hours or more....	6	1
None.....	-	22

Changes in this area have been primarily of two types. Restructuring of all or substantially all content has taken place in ten schools since 1952. Rearrangement or addition of content without fundamental reorganization is reported in thirteen other schools. Twenty schools report no change, and the extent of change in one is not clear.

The major changes in structure are described in similar ways by various schools. Usually such courses as "Social Insurance", "Public Assistance", "History of Public Welfare" and "Legal Aspects of Social Work" have been combined to create one long-term course. One school describes the course as a "broader presentation of social welfare organization and administration, in public and private agencies, child welfare services, public assistance, social insurance and related programs."

Changes in content, order or requirements without major reorganization may be summarized as follows. Five schools shifted material from one course to another. For example, in three schools material on legal aspects of child welfare was shifted from one course to another without change in the other offerings in this area. In another school material on administration was dropped from the public welfare course when a generic course in administration was added as a requirement for all students. Eight schools shifted the timing of required courses, changed courses from elective to required status, added single courses and lengthened the time allowed for existing courses, with presumably some added.

Few content problems relating specifically to this area were reported. One school in which there is a preprofessional sequence in social welfare, reports that there has been "a feeling among students who had completed the group major in social welfare or who had had substantial practical experience in public welfare departments that the concentrated presentation in the course did not offer very much new material, while other students, particularly those coming from other undergraduate disciplines and without significant practical experience, felt that they had not enough background for the course." This school had not formerly required the students who had completed the undergraduate major to take the same courses required of new students in the first quarter.

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Human Growth and Behavior As in the social services area, there have been many changes in courses in human growth and behavior. Thirteen schools report combinations of courses formerly offered — usually psychiatric information and medical information — to create either a sequence of courses or one integrated course over one or both years. The most common titles of the integrated courses are "Human Growth and Behavior", "Growth and Change", and "Human Growth and Development", or variations of these.

Fourteen schools report minor changes, which may be summarized as follows:

Table 4

## Curricular Changes in Human Growth and Behavior Courses

Added or dropped single course . . . . .	3
Shifted one or more courses from elective to required status . . . . .	2
Added content or revised content of existing courses . . . . .	4
Changed order in which courses are offered . . . . .	2
Added or decreased class time without change in content. . . . .	2
Planned medical and psychiatric courses jointly, but kept old titles .	1

There were a number of comments on material on psychological testing. In some schools it is included in the basic course. One school dropped a course in testing, another is considering dropping it, while a third is considering adding it.

The lack of uniformity in the offerings in the various schools is clear from the range in the number of hours in specified courses required of all casework students. One school requires only 72 hours, while another requires 320. Most of the schools require between 100 and 200 hours. Figures for the two years may be summarized as follows:

Table 5

## Classroom Hours in Human Growth and Behavior Courses Required of All Casework Students by First and Second Year

Number of Hours	Schools Requiring in	
	First Year	Second Year
Less than 50 hours..	-	27
50 - 99 hours.....	23	16
100 hours or more...	27	-
None.....	-	7

In most of the schools the courses in this area are all required of all casework students. Twelve schools have one or more courses required of psychiatric social work majors and seven have similar courses for medical social work majors. These courses are apparently available to other students on an elective basis.

In several schools material on cultural factors is being dealt with in connection with courses in this area. Although relatively little information was included on this subject, it is apparent that there is still some difference of opinion as to where this material belongs. A few schools listed such material separately from this area.

Social Work Practice Most of the schools made some type of change in the classroom work in social work practice during the period studied. Six report major revision of restructuring of the sequence or a major part thereof. These include schools in which there has been a move toward what one describes as "a fully generic methods sequence in casework and group work running through both graduate years." In some cases changes were made only in the second year, in which separate courses in casework for students having field work in various settings were combined.

That all schools have not been ready to develop a generic second year casework sequence is seen in a few comments. The following excerpt from the report of

a school that is considering such a plan is of interest:

Much faculty discussion has been focused on this part of the curriculum, some members thinking that the groups were being 'short changed' because there was not enough concentration in the respective areas.... The question of integration versus non-integration in the second quarter (of the second year) is a hotly debated point among our faculty members at the present time.

Another reports that members of the casework faculty are "finding it difficult to combine the essential content of the specializations in such a fashion that we shall meet the minimum requirements of the various specializations." This school is offering four different casework courses in the first semester of the second year. In 1954-55, eighteen schools had separate casework courses for second year psychiatric social work majors and fourteen had such courses for medical social work majors. Two had combined courses for students in clinical settings without regard to medical or psychiatric concentration. A small number specified that there were separate courses for child welfare majors and a few designated a group of students as family casework majors.

Twenty schools report changes in one or more courses or requirements in the practice area. It may be that some of these changes represent basic revision of the area, but this is not indicated by the material submitted. Changes in requirements include the following:

Table 6

## Curricular Changes in Social Work Practice Courses

Added required course . . . . .	9
(administration, 4; community organization, 2; research, 1; supervision, 1; casework, 1).	
Eliminated course formerly required . . . . .	3
(group work, 1; administration, 1; group work for casework students and casework for group work students (now together), 1)	

Reduced research requirements . . . . . 1

In addition, four schools report combinations in elective courses. These include a combined course in community organization and administration, a combined course in administration and social work planning, a combination of administration and interpretation, and an interdepartmental seminar in administration, with students from social work, education and public administration.

Specialization in group work has been dropped in one school and temporarily discontinued because of lack of demand in another. New programs have been developed such as a special sequence for foreign students and a sequence in housing and town planning. A new work-study plan in one school has required some shifting of academic work.

The range in hours in courses required of all casework students is large, from 120 to 416. The variation is greatest in the second year, in which some schools have generic courses and others have separate casework courses relating to various settings. The figures are as follows:

Table 7

## Classroom Hours in Social Work Practice Courses Required of All Casework Students by First and Second Year

Number of Hours	Schools Requiring in	
	First Year	Second Year
Less than 100 hours....	5	20
100 - 199 hours.....	39	24
200 hours or more.....	6	5
None.....	-	1

Problems Problems reported by the various schools are hard to evaluate. If the absence of a report means that there were no problems worth noting, it may be said that most of the schools have made their changes without problems. A few reported that there were no problems other than the simple administrative ones of getting new courses approved by university governing bodies, of changing course numbers, etc. Others reported in more detail on the difficulties encountered in shifting from one type of program to another or in making minor changes. These may be discussed under several major headings.

1. Content - Selection of what is essential content for all students — case workers, group workers, students with undergraduate preparation in social work, persons with extensive experience but no previous training, students from other academic departments, degree candidates from other countries — ranks high among the difficulties school faculties have met as they have attempted to make changes. A number of schools expressed concern about what content can be eliminated or condensed without making the theoretical base so superficial as to be valueless. That there are differences of opinion about what is essential is not surprising. Getting faculty agreement on content and weighting of material, to say nothing of the order in which it should be presented, has taken many hours of discussion and study. One dean reported that "the principal problems dealt with the interpersonal relations involved in relinquishing 'property rights' to courses of long standing and in the effort and struggle vested in dropping 'important minutiae' considered more relevant to field work courses than to theoretical courses." Another school reports as follows:

The growing knowledge and increasing volume of literature led to the demand by each faculty member for the inclusion of raw material or new courses, until the volume of 'required knowledge, understanding and skill' was clearly unmanageable within a two year period. It was the recognition of this very practical fact which led to general agreement to limit classroom time to what was judged to be the maximum desirable time, and to ration the time devoted to each area.

2. Coordination - A closely related problem has been that of getting together the various persons who may be involved in giving joint courses. For example, combined courses in human growth and behavior may involve collaboration of a pediatrician, a psychiatrist, a psychologist, a social anthropologist and a social worker. Frequent conferences may be necessary to plan sharing of responsibility.

3. Public Relations - Several schools reported on the need for interpretation of changed programs. One found it difficult to interpret the new plan to the university administrative bodies that pass on courses. Another commented on the need for "taking agencies and alumni along" during periods when faculty members themselves were feeling their way in planning new approaches to material. Another commented on helping students to accept a new plan.

Comment As noted under the various sections, there has been extensive activity in restructuring of courses into local sequences in the three areas. This undertaking has posed problems in integrating the subject matter previously included in discrete courses. The problems arising from attempts to integrate the total educational experience, integration between areas, was not explored in this study.

#### B. THE WRITTEN RESEARCH REQUIREMENT

All schools require, in addition to courses in Research, a research experience which includes some kind of a written report. Most schools allow either the individual thesis or the group project.

Table 8

#### Number of Schools Requiring Thesis or Group Project

Individual Thesis <u>or</u> Group Project . . . . .	36
Individual Thesis <u>only</u> . . . . .	12
Group Project <u>only</u> . . . . .	2

In the thirty-eight schools which allow the group project, considerable differences exist in the size and the type of the written report. The "group" ranges from three to twenty or thirty, with a median of about five. In eighteen schools, students write a section of a single group report; in twenty schools, students write an individual, complete report of the project.

Changes in the written research requirement were difficult to classify. The majority of schools indicated minor changes, such as: introduction of a "Research Seminar"; changing the written requirement from a single, composite report to an individual report based on the total group findings; reducing the credit hours for the research experience; clarification of the role of the faculty adviser, agency and student; reducing field work by one half day and giving the time to a "laboratory" period for the group project, etc.

The major changes involved either the introduction of group projects or some significant change in the existing plan for group projects.

Table 9

## Major Changes with Regard to Group Projects

Major change made since 1952 . . . . .	14
Major change to be made . . . . .	3
No major change since 1952 . . . . .	33

The reasons given for the change from the individual thesis to the group project were many. They can be summarized as follows:

1. Through the group experience, research can be made an integral part of the two year program, rather than a thing apart. The isolated course or courses and a terminal requirement are changed into a progressive sequence and an integral element of social work practice.
2. It is a more economical and effective use of faculty time.
3. It allows more students to graduate within the two years.
4. Both students and faculty experience much disappointment and frustration with the individual thesis.
5. The individual thesis seems to engender strong negative attitudes to Research which persist long after graduation.

A few schools indicated their problems in making the change toward the group projects:

1. Weak students manage to fulfill the research requirement by following and copying, to a large extent, the work done by the instructor and the stronger students.
2. Opposition from the university to the principle involved.
3. Administrative problems.
4. Resistance within the faculty of the school of social work.

A few schools allow other forms of the written research requirement:

1. Non-credit Paper - "The paper must represent skill and selection, evaluation and organization of materials, and reflect a knowledge and reasonable mastery of the recognized standards for preparing a scholarly paper for publication in the field in which the paper is written. The paper may reveal a functioning understanding of a wide latitude of reading in the literature of the area; it may indicate a careful analysis of a specific problem in the area; it may present a systematic experiment in the area; or it may present any combination of the three. The paper must be directed by the major professor and must be read and approved by members of the oral examining committee."
2. Essay - "Students may elect to write either an essay or a thesis. . . . This option recognizes varying interests and abilities in research among students and permits latitude in satisfying the research requirement."

3. Seminar Papers - "Each student prepares two or more scholarly papers based largely on library research or one such paper plus an empirical study of the same quality as a thesis but smaller in scope."

Comment Although most schools allow both the individual thesis and the group project, there is a very definite and strong trend toward the group project.

The term "group project", however, is variously understood; there are big variations in the size of the group, the source of the material, and the roles of the student and the faculty.

Schools are striving to clarify the objectives of their research programs and are experimenting with the means toward the objectives, as they now see them.

However, each school is trying to work out its own research program independently, apparently upon the conviction that each school is unique in its goals, resources and problems. Identification of the desirable common characteristics and the stabilization of the research program in the schools, based upon the current experiences and the results of the experimentation, may be indicated as something desirable in the near future.

#### C. FIELD WORK

The fifty schools responding to the questionnaire can be grouped in three categories according to the type of field work plan being used.

Use of Block Plan Only (5 schools) The block plan hours of field work usually include some time for formal classes, research projects and required reading courses so that a broad educational experience results rather than only field practice as such.

The time required for first year students varies from 600 to 1443 hours in the field, but the 1443 hours reported by one school includes at least two formal courses, hence the actual field work time may be much nearer the median figure of 650 hours. On the other hand, the other four schools require from 600 to 650 hours over a 15 to 18 week period whereas the school reporting 1443 hours continues the field experience for 37 weeks.

For second year students the time varies for four of the schools reporting from 600 to 960 hours per year spread over intervals of 15 weeks to 6 months. In some instances part of the second year field work time is devoted to work on a research project closely related to the field experience. The fifth school reports 1295 hours of field experience over a 37 week period including two formal courses and four hours per week devoted to research.

In none of the schools using the block plan exclusively was any proposal for change reported, although one school had contemplated moving to a concurrent first year and block second year. The proposal was abandoned on the grounds of non-acceptance by the field agencies.

Use of Block and Concurrent Plan (15 schools) The fifteen schools in this category can be further subdivided into two groups. In one group would be the schools which offer as a regular plan block field work in one of the two years and concurrent in the other. There are five such schools, including two to be started in 1955. The other eleven schools regularly use the concurrent plan for two years with optional block plans used in special circumstances for part-time or special students. Of this latter group two schools use a short block placement at the end of the first year of concurrent field work.

The total field work time for these schools averages slightly more than 1100 hours for the two years, including both block and concurrent plans.

Almost every school reporting in this category is contemplating or has effected changes in the field work plan. These changes, however, cannot be classified easily to show any leading developments. In several cases block plans are being or have been initiated in connection with some form of work-study program. In other cases the block plan was initiated to take advantage of specialized placement opportunities located some distance from the school. In one case the school is dropping the block plan and will con-

tinue only on the concurrent basis. One conclusion that can be drawn from comments by the schools in both this category and the first category is that the block placement should extend over a five to six month period. For example, several schools using the summer block plan expressed dissatisfaction with the short time span. Other schools revised the calendar to allow block placements to run longer than the usual semester. Another conclusion is that growing interest is evident in the plan of using the first year as the concurrent year with the block plan being used in the second year. However, it should be noted that all the schools in the second category are presently about evenly divided in the offering of block placements during either the first or second year of training.

Use of Concurrent Plan Only (30 schools) Among the thirty schools using concurrent field work only, the variations in plan are of minor nature relating to number of days and hours in the field with field work hours averaging about 1100 for the two years.

Table 10

Number of Schools According to Days Per Week  
in The Field, By First Year and Second Year

Days Per Week	First Year	Second Year
2	16	4
2½	3	6
3	11	20

The most common pattern is two days per week in the first year and three days per week in the second year. In recent years four schools have moved from three days a week to two days a week in the field in the first year. One school adopted this plan and then, after an experimental period, returned to three days per week in the first year.

Eighteen of the schools reported no changes in the field work plan. One school had recently changed from block to concurrent and one school was projecting a change to second year block plan. Several schools incorporate research field work time to the extent of  $\frac{1}{2}$  day per week during the second year. A number of schools reported calendar changes from traditional university patterns to allow for continuity of field work during the exam and registration periods. Four schools provided more field work for second year psychiatric and medical placements -- requiring three days per week in these and two days per week for students in other settings.

Comment The common thread of emphasis regarding field work lay less in the physical arrangements of time and span and more in the direction of improving the quality of the experience. Numerous schools noted improved agency liaison plans, higher degrees of cooperation and improved structural plans for faculty with responsibility for field work. The changes dictated by expedience of a particular situation or those related to shifts in plan from block to concurrent or number of hours and days all seemed less relevant than the basic consideration of viewing the field experience as a highly integrated part of the total learning situation. There is increasing emphasis upon viewing the field experience as a regular course of instruction with definable content. One school says, "...the field courses offered the opportunity to teach not merely the application of knowledge, but knowledge itself, principles, concepts, ideas and values." Another school says, "We have been working on improvement of field teaching methods (particularly clarification of objectives) and enriching the students' experience by a better selection of learning opportunities."

EDUCATION FOR THE FIELD OF CORRECTIONS

There has been increasing pressure in recent years for social work education to take more responsibility for recruiting and preparing personnel for work with juvenile and adult offenders. In an effort to see in what way the Council might be most helpful, an ad hoc Committee on Corrections was established. The Committee, which convened for the first time at the Annual Program Meeting, Chicago, January 1955, agreed to ask the cooperation of the graduate schools in an attempt to learn:

Whether any member of the school faculty had been given specific responsibility for work in the correctional field?

What types of requests come to the schools from correctional agencies?

What response the schools make to such requests?

What correctional agencies, if any, are used for field work placements?

What courses are given which relate to this field?

A sub-committee consisting of Maurice Connery, chairman, Frank Flynn and Hugh Reed formulated a questionnaire to encompass these points.

At its meeting in San Francisco, June 3, 1955, Mrs. Elliot Studt, chairman of the ad hoc Committee on Corrections, presented a preliminary report. Thirty-eight of the fifty-eight then accredited graduate schools in the United States and Canada had replied to the questionnaire. From the replies it was possible to discern both the nature of interest on the part of the schools in the correctional field and some of the difficulties they face in their efforts to serve the needs of this field. A summary of the returns follows:

The most important item was the allocation of priority by the schools to the need to expand educational services for the correctional field. Of the thirty-eight schools reporting, eight gave this area top priority for development; nineteen gave it moderate priorities; six assigned low priority and five were unwilling to report a priority rating. It was clear that one of the factors which had influenced the eleven schools assigning "low" or "no" priority to development in this field was the wording of the question describing work with corrections as a "specialty". A number of these schools stated that they were interested in expanding placements in correctional agencies but that such expansion would necessarily take place within the generic organization of their curricula. Three of four schools indicated that in their judgment the present generic curriculum included all that was necessary in the preparation of social workers who might seek employment in correctional agencies. A larger number indicated that lack of interest and the small demand from local correctional agencies determined the low priority they accorded to this area of practice. A number of schools indicated that by using material from the correctional field in historical, social organization and law courses and by using correctional cases in the methods courses they were incorporating material from this area in their core curriculum. They indicated that evidence of the effectiveness of this method was found in a number of student theses.

The committee was in agreement that the questionnaires showed an unexpectedly wider interest in corrections and indicated further that schools of social work would welcome leadership from the Council in planning expansion of educational services to this field.

On the previous day, June 2, 1955, the Council had sponsored, with the National Probation and Parole Association, a public meeting on "How Can Social Work Make Its Maximum Contribution to the Field of Corrections?" The issues raised in that meeting were in part a reflection of the findings of the questionnaire but additional questions of significance for the committee, the correctional field and education for social work were:

Is generic social work content as it now stands adequate to prepare social workers for work in correctional agencies?

Is a two year graduate course required to prepare workers for a field which is desperately lacking in personnel with any sort of specific professional preparation?

Should more attention be given to work with group processes and to skills in manipulation of social structure in comparison with current emphasis on one-to-one treatment in correctional work with offenders?

How can the artificial separation between adult and juvenile correctional work as it appears in social work thinking be overcome?

How can employers be so enlightened that they seek to employ professionally trained workers and know how to use them?

How can the components of correctional jobs be studied so as to determine which jobs in the field require social work education, which require only certain contributions from social work knowledge, which require preparation by other disciplines such as criminology, psychology, etc.?

In summary, the committee agreed that social work education must continue to modify its course content in order to meet changing needs and emphasis in practice. There are wide differences among the schools of social work as to what they consider appropriate education for work in corrections. There is obvious readiness on the part of a majority of schools and the field to work together on whatever community of interest can be identified. The meetings gave evidence that this shared interest is extensive. The job now before the committee is to sharpen those issues which must be clarified in order to obtain the most productive collaboration. The committee hopes to further this aim in the workshop planned for the Annual Program Meeting of the Council in Buffalo, January 1956.

#### SOCIAL WORK SALARY TRENDS AND QUALIFICATIONS

##### Special Recruitment Issue

The Council has received a number of inquiries and comments as a result of the publication in June 1955 of the Special Recruitment Issue of Social Work Education. Several organizations recommended the purchase of this issue to their members in their own publications. Among these were: the National Social Welfare Assembly, American Occupational Therapy Association and National Travelers Aid Association. While Shifting Scenes, the Travelers Aid monthly, gave the material a much-appreciated boost, the comment was offered that insufficient emphasis had been placed on the low level from which the appreciable rise in salaries for social workers had had to come.

The volume and complexity of social work positions is such that when an attempt is made to tabulate and summarize such a wealth of material some omissions are inevitable. A further complicating factor with respect to collecting data from public agencies is the necessity for securing information from both the state civil service or merit system agencies and the operating departments which actually employ social workers. In the interest of brevity, some details of individual positions and agencies had to be omitted.

An example of data presented with the possibility of inadvertent misinterpretation involved New York State which has both a state-supervised, locally-administered public welfare program and civil service system. On the basis of the tables and descriptive material contained in Social Work Education with respect to the public welfare staffs in New York State (and no doubt other states as well) an inaccurate conclusion might have been drawn to the effect that high school graduation constituted the only educational requirement for New York State. Actually the minimum qualifications for caseworker in New York State are college graduation or high school graduation. In the latter case there is an additional requirement of either four years of experience in social work or teaching. (The option of substituting experience for college graduation is designed to enable the counties and cities to recruit persons, lacking a college degree, who at one time taught school or worked in public welfare and now desire to return to or enter the field of public social service.) Over 95% of those appointed to casework positions in New York State are college graduates. For the position of case supervisor in local welfare departments in New York State at least four years of experience as a caseworker is required.

Here again the omission of New York State data on local salaries and the necessary telescoping of some salary ranges into a composite may have given an erroneous impression. Salaries paid civil service personnel are established by local officials and county welfare departments are required to maintain the same level as those of comparable government salaries within the county. There is considerable variation in salaries among the counties, but the State Department of Social Welfare does maintain complete data on salaries paid in all local jurisdictions.

The Council hopes this explanation will serve to clear up any misinterpretation of the data it published in the Special Recruitment Issue. Compilation of useful information on salary changes and educational requirements in the field of social work is difficult. The effort seemed worthwhile, despite these difficulties, in order to provide some evidence of trends.

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